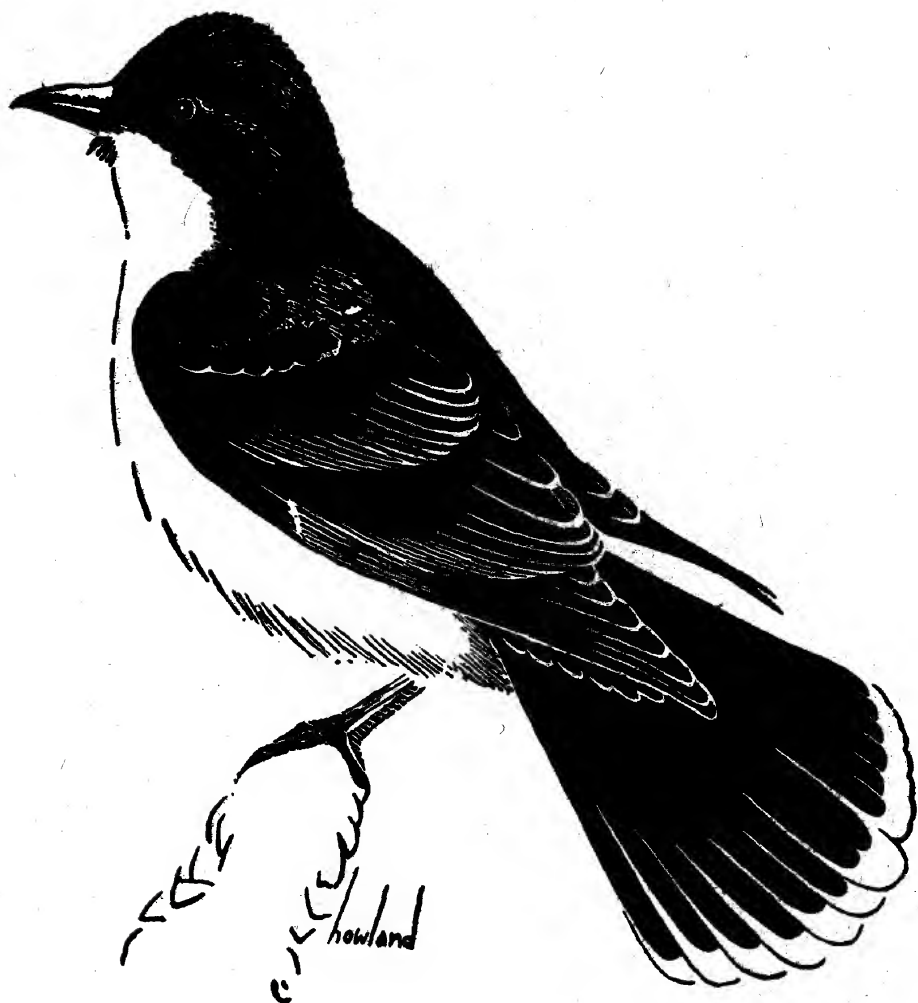


# *The* **KINGBIRD**



VOLUME III, No. 3

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**FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS**



# *The* KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS

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## NOTICE

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## YOUR PRESIDENT SAYS . . . . .

In recent years conservationists have been emphasizing the importance of habitat preservation — and rightly so. Prohibition of shooting will not maintain wildlife unless there are places where they can breed and feed during their normal life cycle.

In the United States most bird species are now accorded legal protection. What is more: popular sentiment increasingly supports and gives effectiveness to the law. But many people who would be outraged by the killing of a single songbird, acquiesce in the needless cutting of ancient forests, the drainage of swamps and the filling of salt marshes, without realizing that thereby entire populations of many species are being extirpated. Industrial progress often requires destruction of natural environments, but the public must be made conscious of what is being lost as well as what may be gained, so that relative values may be weighed intelligently, and something preserved of natural environments that man-made machines cannot replace.

When we urge the conservation of wildlife, we do so primarily for the sake of ourselves. The greater our urbanization the more contact with the natural countryside becomes a recreational need. Birds — in their unfettered energy and graceful form — epitomize the spirit of the wild. This (and the ease with which they may be observed) may account in large measure for the growth of bird-watching as a hobby.

While today in the United States the basic conservation problem is habitat preservation, we should not be misled into assuming that laws regulating or prohibiting killing are unimportant. Some of the hunting fraternity (incidentally urging longer open seasons and bigger bag limits) would have us believe that the reduction in game is due not to gunning but only to disappearance of habitat. The falsity of this contention is readily shown. The species exterminated on our continent were directly killed off by man, while habitats were still ample. Only when we are dealing with fully protected species having an adequate breeding stock can habitat be regarded as the sole important factor. The reproduction rate of our birds evolved over thousands of years to meet the drain to which they were subjected by natural conditions — chiefly the hazards of migration, winter, disease and predation. Reproduction was not adjusted to the additional losses from mechanized man using a shot-gun. In the case of the larger birds which men have regarded as targets (whether called game or not) it is apparent that direct killing remains a major consideration.

Let me draw examples from an area with which I have some acquaintance, though the situation is paralleled elsewhere in our State. Until about the middle of the last century Long Island was a paradise for migrant ducks and shorebirds, which were shot extensively for sale in the public markets. Later the large colonies of breeding gulls, terns and herons were slaughtered as millinery decorations. By the first decade of the Twentieth Century the killing had wiped out almost every gull and tern colony, had extirpated the southern herons, and had reduced to a pittance the migrant ducks and shorebirds. Meanwhile suitable habitats on Long Island have been steadily reduced or totally wiped out, the trend being accelerated after World War II.

Yet since the 1920's these species have all *increased* on Long Island, despite the diminution of habitat. The explanation is obvious; prohibition of direct killing by man gave breeding stocks a chance to build up and reoccupy the surviving habitats.

It was not until 1916 that conservationists succeeded in having the Federal Government assume the protection of migratory birds. The feather trade was ended. National hunting regulations were established, including prohibition of spring shooting and later of all hunting of shorebirds (except Woodcock). The results gradually became apparent. In 1923 Griscom's "Birds of the New York City Region" indicates that neither Herring Gull, Least Tern, Black Skimmer, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, American Egret nor Snowy Egret were breeding on Long Island, and a number of the fresh water ducks and larger shorebirds were so rare as to be regarded as accidental. By 1942, when Cruickshank's "Birds Around New York City" appeared, all of the Larids and herons mentioned (except the egrets) were breeding, and the shorebirds and ducks had definitely increased, though not to anything like their former number. By 1953 both egrets were nesting, while the other colonial species have extended their breeding stations, and such a formerly rare duck as the Gadwall is breeding locally.

This has been achieved solely as a result of protection — not merely on Long Island but elsewhere in North America. It has happened despite habitat reduction, because in the case of these persecuted species the population had been so slaughtered off that there were not sufficient birds to occupy even the still available habitats. It must be borne in mind that habitat reduction can have the effect of creating an illusion of increased numbers by concentrating the birds in the few remaining localities which remain suitable. This makes the birds even more vulnerable if shooting is permitted. In the West the growth of the human population during the past twenty-five years has resulted in such a drastic change of habitats and such an increase of hunting pressure that shooting regulations have been inadequate to reverse the down-trend in ducks, although these regulations doubtless slackened what would otherwise have been a cataclysmic decline.

Constant watchfulness by conservationists is still required to counteract the pressures to which the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently succumbed when it extended the season on ducks and permitted the shooting of snipe. If this foreshadows the opening of a shorebird season, then the larger species are doomed, for their unsuspicious character and flocking behavior makes them an easy target for the unselective shotgun. The ground recovered as a result of the conservation battles of the first quarter of the century can be wholly lost with a few years of inadequate gunning regulation. But in a Democracy the pen is a mighty weapon. Letters from many people interested in conservation to the Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and even to the President, can strengthen the position of the government biologists whose primary duty and interest is the protection of our wildlife.

Eugene Eisenmann.

## BIRDS OF NEW YORK 1910 TO 1930

ELON HOWARD EATON\*

When the first volume of the *Birds of New York* was published twenty years ago, a very earnest attempt was made to outline the distribution and migrations of New York birds as accurately as could be determined. Since then an enormous amount of field work has been carried on by the field-glass and bird-banding brigades which have largely succeeded the oologist and taxidermist brigades of forty years ago.

The determinations by these modern ornithologists are surprisingly accurate. A brief retrospect will illustrate. Thirty years ago I destroyed much shoe-leather in chasing about the country to see Bohemian Waxwings which proved to be cedar-birds, Orchard Orioles which were immature Baltimores, Blue Grosbeaks which were indigo birds, and Passenger Pigeons which turned out to be perfectly good Mourning Doves.

Now such experiences are mostly reminiscences of the past. The numerous colored plates now in circulation, reproduced from the paintings of the lamented Fuertes and other talented artists, the bountiful supply of bird books descriptive of our native birds and the excellency of the modern binoculars have combined to develop a long line of observers whose work is thoroughly reliable.

There has accumulated, during these twenty years, a great amount of supplementary information on the migrations, breeding, and general distribution of New York birds; but it is surprising to find that not a single species, not mentioned in the "Birds of New York", has been added to the list. To be sure, an actual specimen of the Gray Gerfalcon, taken near Auburn, is now in Rochester, and actual records of the breeding of Turkey Vultures and of Baybreasted Warblers have been added to our previous suspicions of breeding. (It is, in passing, strange that no waifs from the south or west or north or from Europe have been wafted to our shores during these 20 years. No less than 32 species of North American birds are recorded by Saunders and Clarke as accidental visitants to Britain but barely a dozen European waifs have ever been recorded from New York — and no new ones during the last 20 years.) But the principal alterations in the records are of change in relative abundance and of the geographical distribution of breeding species.

During the past 20 years the writer's principal attention to bird-study, aside from teaching the science of ornithology in the college class-room, has been a study of the various factors which determine the relative abundance of species, in the hope that more definite knowledge could be assembled to aid in the preservation and encouragement of our avifauna. In this work many censuses of definite areas have been made with notes on the character of each area, its soil, vegetation, moisture, temperature and any other factors which might presumably affect the success of the birds inhabiting the tract. And careful comparisons with the nature and avifauna of each tract 20 and 40 years ago have been made whenever possible.

\*E. H. Eaton died March 27, 1934. He read this recently found unpublished manuscript at the Amer. Ornithologists Union meeting in Salem, Mass., on Oct. 21, 1930. We hope to publish a similar summary of New York birds covering the period 1930-1950.



These studies have revealed a much greater change in the status of many birds than one would naturally expect, very few species having retained their status of twenty years ago unaltered. Sectional changes are of course to be expected in such cases as deforestation and draining of marshes, but a decided widespread variation in abundance has been observed in at least 61 species of our New York birds. We will give brief summary of the more conspicuous changes with some of the probable causes.

Gulls and terns have increased due to greater protection on their breeding grounds and the suppression of the traffic in plumes. The Black Tern is more and more invading the New York marshes as a breeding species. We have too many Herring and Ring-billed Gulls for the welfare of our frogs, toads and marsh birds.

Of our Anatidae in general, they have declined. The Canada Goose, Black Duck, Goldeneye, American and Red-breasted Mergansers have nearly held their own. The Ring-neck is a more regular but not abundant migrant. The Redhead and Canvasback are more common as winter residents on Seneca and Cayuga Lakes, and the Whistling Swan is decidedly more common in those years when it passes over western New York instead of the western end of Lake Erie. The Ruddy Duck is rather scarce and the teal reduced to one-tenth of their former abundance. The Bufflehead is steadily declining. The closed season on the Wood Duck has not been so effective as it has in the case of the Swan, because of the difficulty of enforcing the law. Every summer large numbers of Wood Ducks are reared in the few remaining strongholds of this species in central and western New York, but the majority of them are slaughtered before they can migrate southward, and in the South their fate is scarcely improved.

The general wildfowl situation is clearly due to the combination of two unfavorable factors — namely a reduction of the breeding area and too extensive shooting. To improve the situation it is imperative that extensive Federal and State preserves be established and that shooting be more restricted. In the case of the Whistling Swan a closed season has done wonders because the breeding grounds are largely unaffected by the development of agriculture in the Northwest, but those species that nest largely in the prairie provinces and in the northern tier of states are in real danger.

Of our New York herons, the breeding species are barely holding their own because of the progressive elimination of swamps and marshes, and because there is no state law protecting the Bittern and Great Blue Heron. The southern herons which visit us in summer, after their breeding season, have shown a steady increase in recent years, especially the American Egret and Little Blue Heron. This is unquestionably due to the greater protection which has increased their numbers in the South. A count of birds in a trip through Florida last winter by Mr. Savage and the writer clearly indicated that the Louisiana and Little Blue Herons are common enough, the Egret increasing, and the Snowy Heron not increasing as rapidly, — probably because its plumes are more in demand and there are too few protectors to enforce the law.

Our shore birds have shown a tendency to increase after the shameful slaughter to which they were subjected twenty and more years ago, with the exception of the Esquimo Curlew, the Golden Plover and the Upland

Plover. These three species, I fear, are receiving the "Coup de grace" on their wintering grounds in South America, but the smaller species, especially those that winter on our southern shores, are coming back. The most spectacular improvement is that of the Killdeer which shows several hundred percent increase in the interior of New York and is extending its range. Most of the northern species also show improvement, especially the Knot, Dowitcher, Red-back, and the Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers. This change is unquestionably due to the restriction of shooting along the coast and in the interior. The Woodcock and Snipe are still in a precarious situation because they are not yet sufficiently protected, especially where they are concentrated in their winter quarters.

Our New York Gallinae furnish a sad tale. The Heath-hen and Wild Turkey disappeared from the state long before I was born. During the last 20 years I have seen the Bobwhite practically disappear from the interior of the state and the Spruce Grouse from the Adirondacks, and the Ruffed Grouse decline to almost the vanishing point in the more thickly settled country districts. This decline of the grouse is nothing new. I have been a personal observer and sympathizer since fifty years ago in November when I killed my first cock grouse. Of scores of inimical forces conspiring against this glorious bird I will mention a few which I have *personally seen in operation* — The destruction of coverts and food-producing plants by deforestation and pasturing, especially the isolation of coverts in the more settled areas by the destruction of connecting links; the diminution of the food-supply by various agencies, as the chestnut-blight, the successive failure of the beech-nut crop and the widespread attacks on thornapple fruit by fungus; the automobile and the gun; the dog, cat, fox, weasel and mink; the Goshawk, Cooper's Hawk, Great Horned Owl and Crow, unfavorable weather in the breeding season; and finally disease. But in the open country where the grouse has utterly failed the pheasant has succeeded, in spite of the fact that the crows get 75% of the eggs that are laid in April and early May, and the farmers mow over a large proportion of the eggs that are being incubated in June and July, and many farmers shoot the birds at every opportunity, claiming they are injurious, and every open pheasant day in my county sounds like the battle of the Marne, the hunters coming from 50 and 100 miles away to join in the slaughter, and the Conservation Department has forbidden further importation of eggs or pheasants into the county; and yet the ring-neck is more plentiful today in Ontario County than it was 20 years ago. The terrain of rolling plains with numerous fields of grain and cabbage and alfalfa and frequent patches of swampy cover is adapted to the needs of the bird, and the pheasant is a persistent breeder which can cope with the cat. This is the explanation of the anomaly.

The recent history of our hawks and owls is a pitiful chapter. The Barn Owl is trying zealously to colonize New York from the south, and we have had the record invasion of Snowy Owls, Goshawks and Gyrfalcons quite recently (1926-27 but nearly all our records of these species are of specimens that were killed by gunners. We do not mourn for the Goshawks and Snowy Owls as much as some people think we ought to do. But all our other hawks and owls, with the possible exception of the Marsh Hawk, are reduced to one-tenth their former numbers. This applies to the Short-eared and Long-eared Owls as well as the Great-horned Owl. They are killed by 90% of the hunters on every possible occasion in spite of the law or in ignorance and usually left to rot in the field. The same is true of the

Rough-legged, Broad-winged and Sparrow Hawk. I never found the remains of a game bird in a Rough-legged Hawk but almost entirely small rodents; I have cleaned up the skulls from 385 pellets cast by the Long-eared Owl and exhibited these birds and their work and explained their value to sportsmen's organizations but only those who are real nature-lovers respond. The vast majority listen only to the cry of "Kill the vermin", "Shoot the hawks and owls". These conditions are the principal cause of the decline of our raptores.

Meanwhile the Turkey Vulture has made a phenomenal advance in New York. Numerous reports of these birds come from all parts of southern and western New York. Their nest has been found in Genesee and Westchester counties. We see several of them on every trip to the Oak Orchard Swamp and to the hilly country which lies west of Naples. This invasion of the vulture has been growing in magnitude for many years, and the birds are largely unmolested, the sentiment which protects them in the South having been absorbed by the countrymen of New York.

Of our woodpeckers, curiously enough, the one that shows an increase is our largest and showiest, — the Pileated Woodpecker, while all the rest are scarcely holding their own. The Flicker which might be expected to flourish in agricultural communities has found a serious menace in the increase of the Starling and the consequent fight for the nesting hole.

This Starling introduced in 1890 had reached Newburg in 1905, bred first at Geneva in 1917, and now is firmly established throughout the state except in the wooded mountainous districts. As early as 1924 it was one of the common birds from Malone to Staten Island and from Westfield to Orient, and it would run a close, if not a winning, race with any species for the position of most numerous bird in New York State.

The Raven is now practically, if not entirely, extirpated from the state; but the Crow keeps on increasing or at least holding its own in spite of the curses and the guns of most sportsmen and many farmers.

The Prairie Horned Lark declined after 1910, but is now steadily increasing again.

Of our Icteridae, the Bobolink declined seriously and then increased again as a New York species; the Baltimore Oriole has also had considerable fluctuation in numbers; the Meadowlark is decidedly less numerous in spite of legal protection than it was way back in the days when it was on the list of legal game; the Red-winged Blackbird is still one of our abundant species in spite of the draining of our marshes because of its nesting more in the meadows and also by concentration of nests in the marshy areas combined with wide foraging over the surrounding fields for food; and the Cowbird, my *bete noir*, is still doing her best to exterminate the warblers and vireos and indigo birds that live near my summer camp.

Our two shrikes are decidedly less common than formerly, the Migrant Shrike being now one of our scarcest summer residents. For the decline of this bird I blame the automobile, which likewise is fated to bring our Screech Owl and Red-headed Woodpecker into the list of disappearing species.

Of the Fringillidae, the Savanna Sparrow is more common, the Field and Vesper less common, the Grasshopper Sparrow much more generally distributed, and the Henslow Sparrow has appeared at numerous stations where it was unknown before. For this spread of the latter species we may thank the increase of abandoned farms in many sandy and upland districts.



## STORMS AND UNUSUAL VISITORS IN LAKE CHAMPLAIN AREA

THOMAS A. LESPERANCE

The coincidence of unusual migrants and severe wind storms has often been observed (Kingbird vol. 1, No. 2). Lake Champlain situated as it is between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Coast provides, no doubt, an alternate route for migrants meeting adverse weather conditions in the east. Storms to the east of Lake Champlain produce a wide variety of visitors but storms from the west bring only the normal species. From September through December these storms appear to drive many species into the Lake Champlain area and if these birds should continue their southern migration probably they would follow Lake George and the Hudson River back to the Atlantic Coast. Records kept for a six year period, 1948-1953, are summarized below.

On Oct. 28-29, 1948 a severe storm in the Gaspé Region of the Gulf of St. Lawrence brought large flocks of Oldsquaws down the Richelieu River into Lake Champlain. This species, though seen on the Lake every year, is not common.

On Nov. 23-24, 1949 severe storms centered in the same area produced numerous Greater Snow Geese on Lake Champlain. Small flocks of thirty to fifty and larger flocks from 100 to 200 were observed for several days. Their normal flight route is down the Atlantic Coast.

On Nov. 25, 1950 a hurricane moved into the area from the east and on Dec. 10 and 11 Brunnick's Murres and Dovekies were observed. Reports from Redpath Museum at McGill University, Montreal, P. Q., stated that both species were very numerous in the St. Lawrence at Montreal. It is also interesting to note that many Snowy Owls were recorded during this same period.

During 1951 no unusual species were noted.

In 1952 the heaviest storms occurred on December 10 and 11, and on the thirteenth Dovekies, Brunnick's Murres and Parasitic Jaegers were observed in the Lake Champlain area.

Already in 1953 several storms have moved into this area. On September 4-6 a great storm moved in from the Atlantic and drove migrants off course down into the Lake Champlain region. On September 7 the Florida Gallinule, Wilson's Phalarope and numerous Common Terns were seen.

There is reason to believe that other species affected by these storms, and equally foreign to the area, have passed through undetected for lack of interested observers.

The importance of Lake Champlain as an alternate route for migrants during these storms must not be overlooked. What is needed are trained observers at strategic points along the Lake. When this is accomplished we can expect a wealth of interesting records to support or disprove this idea.

Keesville, N. Y.

## FLYCATCHING ACTIVITIES OF THE STARLING

WINSTON WM. BROCKNER

In September and October the Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) sometimes resorts to flycatching or swallow-like feeding activities. Kalmbach and Gabrielson (Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus. Vol. 197, p. 197) observed starlings capturing insects on the wing and appearing very much like martins. Beecher (Auk Vol. 70, No. 3, p. 322) says, "... forward vision and pointed wing pre-adapt the introduced starling in North America to take over the Purple Martin's niche when the latter flies south. On warm fall days, it feeds in the air, fluttering and gliding like the martin, but with frequent resting".

On September 10, 1953, I observed this behavior in large numbers of starlings. The activity stretched for over five miles between Hamburg and Woodlawn, New York, and was concentrated along the highways bordered with telephone poles. The birds would perch on the wires and poles and then sally out after passing insects. They rarely ventured over fifty yards from the road. Most of the feeding was at about wire height or a little higher. Upon capturing their prey they would immediately return to the poles and wires. Again, on October 7 while approaching Herkimer, New York I discovered smaller numbers of starlings flycatching. It is interesting to note that on both occasions this activity occurred in the afternoon.

This introduced species, though often a serious competitor of our native birds, sometimes helps in the fight against insects when our native flycatchers have departed for the south.

Buffalo Ornithological Society, Inc., Buffalo, N. Y.

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## PUBLIC RELATIONS AND RADIO

P. P. KELLOGG

One of the aims of the Federation is, or should be, to understand the problems of ornithologists better and to have these problems and the aims of ornithologists understood by the public. This is good public relations.

From the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University a radio program on the general subject of birds, has gone on the air regularly once a week for over 20 years.

Recently this program has been expanded so that it covers the entire State through cooperation with the Rural Radio F-M Network in addition to the stations of Cornell University.

This weekly radio can be of great public relations value in the study of birds. Clubs of the Federation and individual members can help by sending in information about ornithological events to this program. It's a simple and effective way of letting others know what is happening in your community. Club meetings can be announced as well as field trips and the results of censuses.

The Eaton Bird Club of Geneva has by far the best record for using this medium in their publicity. Others should also take advantage of it to keep your community informed of your activities. A postal card will often suffice to get your message across — and it's quick and easy.

This program entitled *Know Your Birds* goes on the air every Saturday morning at 9:15 over the following stations:

WHL-D-FM—Niagara Falls—98 mc.  
WFNF—Wethersfield—108 mc. (Western New York)  
WHDL-FM—Olean—96 mc.  
WVBT—Bristol Center—95 mc. (Rochester)  
WRRR—Ithaca—104 mc. (also Elmira, Corning)  
WVCN—DeRuyter—105 mc. (Syracuse)  
WWNY-FM—Watertown—100 mc.  
WMSA-FM—Massena—105 mc.  
WRUN-FM—Utica-Rome—106 mc.  
WVCV—Cherry Valley—102 mc.  
WFLY—Troy-Alb.-Schen.—92 mc.  
WHVA—Poughkeepsie—105mc.  
WHCU-FM—Ithaca—97 mc.  
WHCU-AM—Ithaca—870 kc.

This program belongs to the people of the State and the Federation can do much to make it more effective.

Why not listen in next Saturday and then let us hear from you.

Laboratory of Ornithology, Dept. of Conservation, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, N. Y.

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## CLUB NOTES AND NEWS

At the annual meeting held on May 23, 1953, three additional clubs were elected to membership in the Federation:

*John Burroughs Natural History Society* of the region about Kingston, *Cornell Field Ornithology Club* of Ithaca, and *Lyman Langdon Audubon Society* of the region about Manhasset and Port Washington, Long Island.

In our last issue we published a list of the officers of the two former clubs. The officers of the *Lyman Langdon Audubon Society* are as follows:

President: Mrs. Mary L. Bonnewall, 249 Mill Spring Road,  
Manhasset, L. I., N. Y.

Vice President: Donald Ross, Bar Beach Road,  
Port Washington, L. I., N. Y.

Secretary: Miss Helen M. Graseck, 70 Davis Road,  
Port Washington, L. I., N. Y.

Treasurer: John F. Porter, 6 Beacon Hill Road,  
Port Washington, L. I., N. Y.

The total number of clubs now members of the Federation is *twenty-eight*.

Since our meeting, we have received a membership application from a twenty-ninth club recently organized in northern Westchester County, (in the neighborhood of Chappaqua, Pleasantville and Hawthorne), called the *Saw Mill River Audubon Society*. Its president is William G. Fennell, Esq., of 60 Broadway, New York, and he resides at 96 Sarles Lane, Pleasantville.

We welcome the new clubs and urge them to send us information regarding their activities.

In our last issue we failed to include the *Cayuga Bird Club* of Ithaca — one of our charter members — since we assumed that that club was being replaced by the new Cornell Field Ornithology Club. We have been advised by our good friend, Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg, that the Cayuga Bird Club remains in existence and is far from inactive, even though meetings are held at irregular intervals. Its president continues to be Dr. A. A. Allen of Cornell University.

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## THE CORNELL FIELD ORNITHOLOGY CLUB

The Cornell Field Ornithology Club was formally organized in the spring of 1951 as an official student organization recognized by Cornell University. Its purpose is to promote further interest in the field study of birds and to cooperate with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in any way possible. Our regular membership consists of about twenty members, both graduate and undergraduate.

Meetings are held every other Wednesday evening during the school year in Fernow Hall. Anyone is welcome to attend. Following the business meeting discussions on ornithological topics are held, or we enjoy hearing about the birding experiences of our members. Since our membership consists of students coming from many sections of the country we are fortunate in being able to hear about a variety of personal experiences. These talks give the listener an excellent idea of what to expect if he should visit a certain locality.

Several regular field trips are being held during the course of the year. At the beginning of each fall semester we have an introductory field trip when we take our new members to many of the better birding places in our area such as Michigan Hollow, Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge and Sandy Pond on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario.

The major activity of the year is our Annual Finger Lakes Winter Waterfowl Census which has taken place for three years in mid-February. Parties from Cornell are assigned territories on every Finger Lake in Central New York. The data has been collected and printed each year. We plan to continue this for at least five years in the hope that we can gather significant data on wintering waterfowl in Central New York.

In March 1953 we applied for membership in the New York State Federation of Bird Clubs and were accepted as a member club on May 16, 1953. We are proud to be affiliated with this statewide organization and offer our help in any ornithological project.

Richard C. Rosche, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, N. Y.

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## SAW MILL RIVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

The Saw Mill River Audubon Society, organized in March, 1953, has enjoyed a rapid growth in its first half year. When, in June 1953, it applied for membership in the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs the Society had 74 members. Its present membership is over 80.

As a branch of the National Audubon Society, the membership territory assigned the Saw Mill River Audubon Society, under the branch solicitation plan, includes the following areas in Westchester County: Briarcliff Manor,



Chappaqua, Hawthorne, North Tarrytown, Ossining, Pleasantville, Thornwood, and Valhalla.

Approximately 125 persons attended the first open meeting late in March which was addressed by Kenneth Morrison, Editor of Audubon Magazine, and Charles Mohr, Director of the Audubon Nature Center in Greenwich, Conn. The April meeting was addressed by Stephen Collins of Rutgers University, and the theme of the May meeting was the Education Program of the National Audubon Society and exhibits of Audubon Junior Club work were displayed.

Officers and directors of the Society are: President, William G. Fennell; Vice president, Mrs. D. J. Overocker; Secretary, Joseph A. Malone; Treasurer, C. Richards Parsons; and Thomas G. Appel, Richard E. Erway, Irving Lachenbruch, Mrs. H. Townsend Laire, William D. McCain, Mrs. Rose S. Moore and Hoch Reid, directors.

For so young an organization, a heavy program already is in full swing. Standing committees have been appointed and are at work on conservation, education, field trips, membership, publicity, social events, and program. A Society publication will be started this Fall.

Four field trips were featured in the summer program, including visits to the Audubon Center at Greenwich, the New Cannan, Conn., Protective Society's reservation, the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation and Camp Edith Macy in Chappaqua. These were in addition to the early Sunday morning walks in May which will be repeated in October.

Major concentration for the coming year will be given to education, particularly organization of Audubon Junior Clubs. The work of Mrs. Overocker and Mrs. Moore in the Chappaqua schools was publicized in a special story in "The Audubon Magazine", and Pleasantville also has made headway in this regard. Organization work will be attempted in other towns in the territory this winter. Many of the Society's new members are planning to enroll in the nature study course beginning in October in the Pleasantville adult education program.

In September the Society is bringing the Audubon Photographic Tour to its territory and it will be displayed, among other places, at the Pleasantville Flower Show, September 10-12, under the auspices of the Garden Club Section of the Pleasantville Women's Club.

The Society's future plans include the awarding to teachers of scholarships to the Audubon Camps of Connecticut and Maine next summer, bringing the Audubon Screen Tours to the area in 1954-1955, conducting a survey looking to establishment of one or more nature trails, cooperation in migration studies now in progress, in addition to monthly meetings and field trips for Society members and friends.

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## THE JOHN BURROUGHS NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The John Burroughs Natural History Society (of Ulster County) wishes to express its appreciation in being accepted as a fellow member into the Federation of Bird Clubs of New York. Members of our organization are individuals from all walks of life but with one thing in common — a love of

Nature. We study just about everything pertaining to Natural History, with ornithology taking the lead.

Our total list of birds may not be impressive because of our particular geographical location but much of this is compensated for by the ecological representation of the three life zones which are found within our borders. For this reason birding is varied and interesting in Ulster County. We can visit the bubbling Marsh Wren in his oozy marsh along the Hudson River or we may visit the misty haunts of Bicknell's Thrush atop such high peaks as Slide Mountain in the Catskills.

All of this is our pleasure and study and we hope we will be able to contribute our share of avifaunal knowledge along with the other sections of this state.

Fred N. Hough, President, John Burroughs Natural History Society, Accord 1, New York.

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## CONSERVATION NEWS

### DOUBLE CRESTED CORMORANT

The New York State Conservation Council, at its meeting in Corning on Oct. 9, unanimously approved a resolution to make the Double-crested Cormorant a protected bird under Section 203 of the Conservation Law of the State of New York. This resolution will be introduced in the coming session of the New York Legislature. We can thank Hi Clements for doing the groundwork on this resolution.

#### AMENDMENT 9

We are glad to report that Amendment No. 9 to the New York State Constitution was adopted by the electorate. This amendment strengthens the protection given to the Forest Preserve, which in recent years has been subject to the danger of invasion for water power purposes.

The Federation, together with most conservation organizations in the State, took an active part in promoting the adoption of the amendment. Representatives of the Federation appeared before the legislative committees which considered the amendment, and our members were influential in obtaining its passage.

## STATE DIVIDED INTO NEW REPORTING REGIONS FOR KINGBIRD AND STATE BIRD BOOK

At a meeting of the *State Bird Book Committee*, held in Keuka Park, N. Y., on June 30, 1953, the state was considered once again from the standpoint of reporting regions for *THE KINGBIRD* and the forthcoming state bird book, and a new and final map was drawn. This map is the culmination of more than a year's work, and takes into consideration the combined viewpoints of the committee, the present regional editors, and other interested persons.

Before completing this map, a survey was made to determine the present coverage of the state by bird clubs and societies, and this survey had an important influence on the final result. Other factors taken into consideration were: geographic and topographic boundaries, probable location of future clubs, size, accessibility, and presence of capable editors. Each of the new regions includes at least one bird club at present (with one exception).

It is to be stressed that this regional division of the state is for the *reporting* and *collection* of data only. It is probable that any ecological break-down of the state for state book purposes will cut across many of these boundaries. But a division of the state on an ecological basis at the present time would result in the splitting of many areas now worked by organizations, would leave some areas totally uncovered, and would result in boundaries difficult to define or remember.

This new division into reporting regions does not mean that clubs or individuals must necessarily confine their observations to the region in which they are located. Anyone, of course, is free to "bird" wherever he wishes, but for purposes of reporting and collection of records, observations should be sent to the editor of the region in which they are made.

All clubs and individuals are requested to submit their records to the editor of the region in which the records were made, as officially defined herewith:

Region 1. *Niagara Frontier*. Includes all of Niagara, Erie, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany Counties, and those parts of Orleans, Genesee, and Wyoming Counties west of Routes 98 (Pt. Breeze to Batavia), 63 (Batavia to Pavilion), and 19 (Pavilion to Allegany County line).

*Editor:* Clark S. Beardslee

132 McKinley Avenue, Kenmore, N. Y.

Region 2. *Genesee*. Includes all of Wayne, Monroe, and Livingston Counties and those parts of Orleans, Genesee, and Wyoming Counties east of Routes 98 (Pt. Breeze to Batavia), 63 (Batavia to Pavilion) and 19 (Pavilion to Allegany County line), and that part of Ontario County west of Mud Creek and Routes 64 and 21 to the Yates County line at Woodville.

*Editor:* James Barlow

61 Marville Drive, Rochester, N. Y.

Region 3. *Finger Lakes*. Includes all of Chemung, Tompkins, Seneca, Schuyler, Yates and Steuben Counties, and that part of Cayuga County

south of the Seneca River, and of Ontario County east of Mud Creek and Routes 64 and 21 to the Yates County Line at Woodville.

*Editor:* Mrs. Southgate Hoyt  
Aviana  
Etna, New York

Region 4. *Susquehanna*. Includes all of Delaware, Otsego, Chenango, Cortland, Broome, and Tioga Counties.

*Editor:* Not yet determined.

Region 5. *Oneida Basin*. Includes all of Herkimer, Oneida, Madison, Oswego, and Onondaga Counties, and that part of Cayuga County north of the Seneca River.

*Editor:* Fritz Scheider  
151 Seventh North Street, Syracuse, N. Y.

Region 6. *St. Lawrence*. Includes all of St. Lawrence, Jefferson, and Lewis Counties.

*Editor:* Not yet determined.

Region 7. *Adirondack-Champlain*. Includes all of Franklin, Clinton, Essex and Hamilton Counties.

*Editor:* Gordon M. Meade  
Trudeau, N. Y.

Region 8. *Hudson-Mohawk*. Includes all of Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Fulton, Montgomery, Schenectady, Albany, Schoharie, Rensselaer, Columbia, and Greene Counties.

*Editor:* Frazer Turrentine  
110 Union Street, Schenectady, N. Y.

Region 9. *Hudson-Delaware*. Includes all of Sullivan, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, and Rockland Counties, and that part of Westchester County north of Route 117 (North Tarrytown to Chappaqua) and Route 120 (Chappaqua to the Connecticut line).

*Editor:* Robert F. Deed  
50 Clinton Avenue, Nyack, N. Y.

Region 10. *Marine*. Includes all of Suffolk, Nassau, Queens, Kings, New York, Richmond and Bronx Counties, and that part of Westchester County south of Route 117 (North Tarrytown to Chappaqua), and Route 120 (Chauauqua to the Connecticut line).

*Editor:* John Elliott  
3994 Park Avenue, Seaford, N. Y.

In setting up these regions, the committee noted that there are a number of population or educational centers which are not at present represented in the Federation either by clubs or individual members. If the Kingbird seasonal reports, and the state book, are to adequately present New York State ornithology, we must begin collecting data from these neglected areas. The committee suggests that it is a major mission of member clubs and individuals to promote the organization of bird clubs in these areas, and the contacting of individual correspondents who can contribute data. Region 1: Jamestown, Olean. Region 2: Hornell area. Region 3: Genesee area.



Region 4: All counties except Broome. The towns of Oneonta, Cortland and Norwich are strategically located. Region 5: Rome, Utica and the Oswego area. Region 6: Ogdensburg, Canton, Lowville. Region 7: Malone, Plattsburgh, Ticonderoga and Saranac Lake are strategically located. This region has no clubs at present. Region 8: Glens Falls, Saratoga Springs, Schoharie, Hudson, Catskill. Region 9: Poughkeepsie, Newburgh, Middletown.

The committee further recognizes that certain of the more populous regions, such as 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, and perhaps all regions in the future, may require subdivision into districts, in order to lighten the burden on Regional Editors. Such subdivision, with the names and addresses of District Editors, will be announced in *THE KINGBIRD*, as they are decided upon.

Enclosed are two maps, one showing the state divided into reporting regions and the other showing present coverage of the state by the various clubs.

Members of the committee and subcommittees are now at work on criteria for acceptability of records; standard record keeping and reporting procedures; criteria of abundance and frequency; and division of the state into ecologic or physiographic regions. Progress on these will be reported in the future.

A full discussion of progress and plans for the state book will appear soon in *THE KINGBIRD*.

Your comments and criticism on this new regional division are invited. Please address the Chairman of the Committee.

State Book Committee  
Gordon M. Meade, Box 86, Trudeau, N. Y., Chairman  
Robert S. Arbib, Jr., Freeport  
Allan Benton, Albany  
Hazel Ellis, Keuka Park  
Harold D. Mitchell, Buffalo  
Walter Spofford, Syracuse

October 15, 1953.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The *State Bird Book Committee* and the *Publications and Research Committee* have suggested defining the seasons for regional reporting. Starting with the *April* issue of THE KINGBIRD please submit your records to regional editors according to this schedule:

Winter: Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar. — for April issue.

Spring: Apr., May — for June issue.

Summer: June, July — for August issue.

Fall: Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. — for December issue.

If you should see a bird on Nov. 30 it would be included in the Fall season; if seen on Dec. 1 it would be included in the Winter season.

Submit your bird records for October and November 1953 to old regional editors for publication in the December issue. Records from Dec. 1, 1953 to March 31, 1954 should be submitted to the *new* regional editors for the April issue of THE KINGBIRD.

Deadlines for the regional reports to THE KINGBIRD editor will be as follows:

April 10 — April issue  
June 10 — June issue  
Aug. 10 — August issue  
Dec. 10 — December issue

When recording important bird "finds" please give the county, township and nearest village, or their equivalents. The area may be familiar to your club but not to one at the other end of the State.

Where there has been a change in regions or regional editors, please understand that these changes do not go into operation until the *April* issue. We are sorry that there has been some confusion on the timing of this change.

The Editor.

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## A REQUEST

Do you have any New York State hawk migration records for the spring and/or fall periods either of this year or previous years? Richard F. Myers, Fernow Hall, Cornell University, is studying the spring and fall hawk movements within the State and adjacent areas. He needs this sort of information and would appreciate your sending it to him c/o the above address. If possible, please indicate also the place where the birds were seen and the weather conditions at the time.

## EDITORIAL

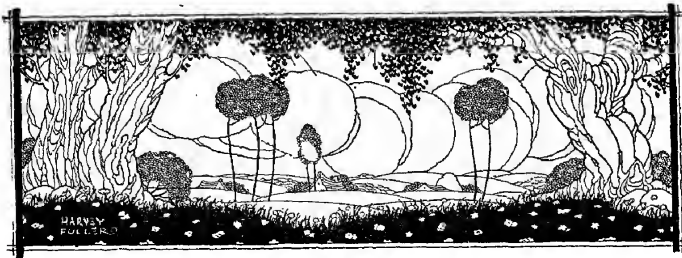
To Allan S. Klonick and his editorial staff we owe many thanks for a job well done. In spite of hardships he has fledged, with your help, a journal of which we can all be proud. It is now our job to see THE KINGBIRD prosper.

The aims of the publication as I see them are: first, to act as a news letter of the Federation; second, to act as a chronological record of bird events; third, to aid in preserving birds.

At present a "birder" in the State is studying hawk migration. By writing a note to THE KINGBIRD he is reaching capable observers in every corner of New York State. With our help his data will be more complete and his summary will give us more knowledge about hawk migration. If his study should uncover striking flight paths where local shooting might be severe we could help again.

By cooperative effort we can learn about such things as variation in clutch size of birds from New York City to Ogdensburg, the time of moult from southern to northern areas and variation in abundance of our breeding species. The *Publications* and *Research Committee* will soon outline a cooperative project for the coming nesting season.

Through greater use of THE KINGBIRD we shall have a more effective journal and Federation, keeping in mind that — "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap".



## REGIONAL REPORTS

### HIGHLIGHTS OF NESTING SEASON MAY-JULY 1953

The nesting season produced many interesting regional "first-nesting" records — the American Egret on Long Island (Fishers Island), the Eastern Turkey (Allegany State Park, Cattaraugus Co.), the Eastern Mockingbird near Batavia (Genesee Co.), the Common Tern south end of Cayuga Lake (Tompkins Co.) and first Ulster Co. records of Purple Martin and Orchard Oriole.

In the unusual "nesting-sites" department, a Killdeer raised three young on top of an office building in downtown Buffalo and a House Wren near Stone Ridge, Ulster Co., chose an abandoned Baltimore Oriole's nest.

From Long Island we got the only report of the unusually wet May affecting the nesting of birds. Here the Least Tern had a poor nesting season.

Wood Ducks were reported as having successful nesting seasons on Grand Island (Niagara River), in the Binghamton area and at Mill Neck (Long Island). Several Ruddy Ducks, one Gadwall and one Redhead were seen with broods at Montezuma Wildlife Refuge (Seneca Co.). Coots were reported nesting near Binghamton and in Rockland Co.

Along the Ontario Lake Plain and from the Finger Lakes-Susquehanna River "corridor" reports of carolinian flavor continue. Five Tufted Titmice were seen at Ithaca and Barn Owls were reported as more plentiful.

Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers were found nesting near Batavia and in the Binghamton area. One was found dead on Long Point, Seneca Lake (Yates Co.) and two were seen near Rochester. Carolina Wrens further emphasize the trend. One was reported at Lewiston (Niagara Co.), two were banded at Etna (Tompkins Co.), two were reported from Sodus Bay (Monroe Co.) and two from the Binghamton area. In the Lower Hudson region it was seen east of the Hudson near Lake Waccabua.

The Blue-winged Warbler was seen feeding young near Rochester, and Dickcissels were again reported from central New York (Interlaken).

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### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EARLY FALL MIGRATION AUG.-SEPT.

Good shore bird flights, poor hawk concentrations and normal to good small passerine passage characterized the early fall migration.

The unusually dry summer lowered the water table to help produce a fine show of sandpipers. Regions in central and western New York report good flights and rarities. A *Willet* and *Hudsonian Goodwits* (Shore Acres, Monroe Co.), and an immature *Avocet* at Montezuma Wildlife Refuge (Seneca Co.) were unusual.

Hawks moved across the State in unspectacular numbers. September 12 marked the first real passage of the *Osprey* near Rochester, Olean and the



Lower Hudson. An immature *Goshawk* was seen August 21 near Logan (Schuyler Co.) and one adult and two immature *Golden Eagles* south of Ithaca Oct. 13.

Early fall wanderers were seen in the Lower Hudson area but elsewhere in the State the small passerine birds showed up about on schedule. The first good wave of warblers in the western part of the State occurred from Sept. 20 to Sept. 26. Blackpolls, Tennessees and Cape May Warblers were seen in good numbers. In the same period (Sept. 21) many warblers were killed by flying into the Empire State Building, Bay-breasted Warblers predominating. White-throated Sparrows started south across the State about Sept. 20.

On the heavily forested Allegheny Plateau hemlocks, sugar maple, white ash and yellow birch have produced fine seed crops. Winter field trips to areas where these trees predominate should be productive. Beechnuts, wild black cherries and acorns — often staple fall foods — were lacking from the dietary and many species shifted to fruits of sugar maple and cucumber (*Magnolia acuminata*), where these were available.



## REGION 1 — WESTERN NEW YORK

The summer months were close enough to normal, in respect to both temperature and precipitation, so that there was little in the weather pattern to affect the nesting or (later) the migration of western New York birds. Observers spent many hundreds of man-hours in the field; however, at this season so many of our trips are taken to adjacent Ontario areas that over 60 per cent of our noteworthy records come from that excellent extra-territorial region. This makes it difficult for us to make any representative report on the shore birds particularly, since there are almost no exposed shorelines on our side of either Lake Erie or Lake Ontario, nor mud flats in the interior.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Only a few American Egrets were reported this summer, the maximum being five at Oak Orchard. A few ducks had arrived in our waters before the end of September; a single American Scoter was present for a few days in late August off Squaw Island in the Niagara River, and two early Gadwalls were reported from Grand Island on September 27. Wood Ducks apparently had a good season at Burnt Ship Creek on Grand Island, 75 being counted there on September 24 by the Heilborns. Since the Buffalo Ornithological Society will be permitted to act in an advisory capacity to the state's park commission in respect to this area, it is hoped that the many new homes which will be provided for the Wood Ducks will produce a large population of this beautiful species.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Turkeys nested successfully in Allegany State Park. King Rails were found breeding north of Akron for the second year. Good flocks of Golden Plover were reported from Grand Island, beginning September 8. A most unusual record of three young Killdeer on the roof of an office building in downtown Buffalo on June 22 was reported by Mitchell. The upper Niagara River lived up to its reputation as a headquarters for gulls and terns. One or two Little Gulls were present throughout September; a Sabine's Gull was seen off Squaw Island on September 20 (Nathan, Schaffner, et al.) and on the 22nd (Axtell); and a Franklin's Gull was reported in October. From the 12th of September on, many records of Forster's Tern were received, with a maximum of ten individuals; and three Arctic Terns were observed on September 13 at Bird Island by Nathan, Schaffner, et al., constituting the first record of this species for many years. Among the other species, Common Terns reached their peak in mid-September (3000 individuals), and Black Terns a few days later (5000 on the 19th). A family of Barn Owls was reported from Buffalo by Axtell.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Purple Martins, in large numbers along with Robins and Grackles, again joined the starling roosts which still plague our cities. Carolina Wrens were reported from Lewiston for the first time by the Klabundes. A nest of ten Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was found in the Tonawanda Indian Reservation on May 31 (Nathan, Schaffner, et al.). The first nesting record of the Mockingbird from western New York was given us by Mrs. Pixley. Actually there were two successful nests by a pair of these birds near East Bethany, Genesee Co. (near Batavia). Two young were raised in the first, and three in the second.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Warblers were late in getting their fall migration under way, but all through September they were present in good numbers. In fact, it was one of the best migrations in recent years, and lasted well into October for several species.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** There was little of the unusual about these families this summer and fall, numbers and dates being for the most part normal. White-throated Sparrows were late in arriving, but after they did come, they and the Juncos overflowed into the city residential areas in greater than usual numbers.

Clark S. Beardslee  
132 McKinley Ave.  
Kenmore 17, N. Y.

## REGION 2 — SOUTHERN TIER — PART 1

Except for a short rainy period in August, this has been one of the driest summers on record, following a wet spring, and heat records fell the end of August and first week in September. No particular effect has been noticed, however, on the bird life, except that more areas were exposed for shore birds, because of low

levels of lakes and streams. Early fall migration appears to be normal.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** A Common Loon was seen by K. Thorp opposite Long Point on Cayuga 8/25. Double-crested Cormorant, Ithaca 9/30 (K. Thorp). Great Blue Herons and American Egrets were common at Montezuma, approximately 50 Egrets being seen there on 9/5. After the first week in August up to 40 American Egrets were seen west of Endicott. No reports this year of Little Blue Herons or Snowy Egrets.

Late in July several broods of Ruddy Ducks, one of Gadwalls and one of Red-heads were conspicuous at Montezuma, and in general the breeding population of ducks had a better year than last (Hewitt). It was a good year for Wood Ducks in the Binghamton area.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** An immature Goshawk was reported near Logan (Schuyler Co.) 8/21 (R. Myers and Brumstead). Myers, who has been making a particular study of hawk migration, reports no sizable flocks of Accipiters except on 10/7 when 15 were seen at head of Cayuga. Red-tails filtered slowly through the Southern Tier with 17 seen on 10/13, and 4 Red-shouldered in central Tioga County on 9/8. One Rough-legged Hawk was reported 10/12 just north of Ithaca.

Immature Bald Eagle over Cornell campus 10/13 (Seeber and Myers); 1 adult and 2 imm. Golden Eagles 10/13 just south of Ithaca (Brumstead, Eipper, Hartman, Myers). A migrant Marsh Hawk in central Tioga Co. 10/8 (Myers). An Osprey was seen almost daily in Sept. and Oct. at head of Cayuga.

Falcons seemed to be moving the last two weeks in September, and a Peregrine was seen at Connecticut Hill on 9/22, one over Cornell Campus 9/29 (Myers), two at Howland's Island and two at Montezuma, the middle of October (Hewitt).

A pair of Coots with young were seen near Triple Cities, Aug. 9 (Bemont).

Sora and Virginia Rails still at Spencer Marsh 10/17 (AAA). Coots are still low in numbers. Black-bellied Plover 8/20 at Montezuma (AAA); Golden Plover at Hog Hole, Ithaca 9/30 (PPK and class).

Probably the most unusual record for the period was an Avocet, in fall plumage, at Montezuma 9/20, reported by Seeber et al, and seen by other groups also. A Northern Phalarope was swimming in a farm pond at Arnot Forest the week of 8/17 (Hewitt et al).

An early date for Great Black-backed Gull was 9/17 (K. Thorp). First nesting of Common Tern at south end of Cayuga Lake reported by M. Sherwood on 7/18. Two nests, containing 2 and 3 eggs, were found on a rocky strip serving as a break-wall. Neither nest was successful. Last date for Common Tern 9/10, Caspian Tern 8/22 (K. Thorp).

More Barn Owls were reported in Ithaca area than for many years.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** A late Nighthawk was seen on Jordani field trip 10/10, at McLean Bog.

Red-bellied and Red-headed Woodpeckers could be seen regularly at Montezuma. A dead immature Red-head was found on the highway just west of Freeville 10/10 (M. Guinan).

5 Tufted Titmice at Stewart Park, Ithaca 9/23 (Bock, Risebrough). Winter Wren at Palmer's Woods, Ithaca 9/28 (Gould). 2 Carolina Wrens at Etna, N. Y. on 8/23 (one banded) and again on 10/1 (Hoyt). Two Carolina Wrens were banded near Binghamton July 11 and August 12 (Bemont). Red-breasted Nuthatch 10/18, Ithaca, (A. C. Lane). Pipits at the Hog Hole, Ithaca, 10/11 (Hoyt). Early date for Cedar Waxwing out of nest 7/8 at Etna, (Hoyt). Large flocks of Waxwings in September and October.

Migrant Shrike near Ithaca (8/14 (EGA)).

Near Binghamton 2 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nests were found on the ground on June 3.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Nothing unusual in this group this year. Philadelphia Vireos, always elusive, were reported on 9/21 at the Rifle Range, Ithaca, by Bock, and on 9/22 and 9/24 in Ithaca (K. Thorp).

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Rusty Blackbirds 9/23, Montezuma (Wolk et al), Ithaca 9/25 (K. Thorp), Spencer Marsh 10/17 (AAA).

3 Dickcissels, 10 miles south-east of Interlaken, 6/28 (R. Robbins).

Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Montezuma 9/10 (K. Thorp).

Good Field Sparrow and Song Sparrow migration the week of 10/4 (Hoyt). White-throated Sparrows arrived at A. C. Lane's feeding station 9/20, also an early date Sept. 9 at Vestal Cemetery (Broom Co.).

Snow Bunting, over Spencer Marsh 10/17 (AAA).

Mrs. Southgate Hoyt  
"Aviana", Etna, New York

## REGION 2 — SOUTHERN TIER — PART 2

The chief thing that may be stated concerning the weather in this area the past quarter year is that it has been extremely dry and mostly cool, with an occasional few days of extreme heat. It has not had any very noticeable effect on the movements of birds, however, and the fall migration has been about as usual, except that the lowering of the lakes and drying up of ponds have brought in certain shore birds.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** No Loons have been reported by correspondents, and I saw my first since spring on Oct. 16. First Horned Grebes appear on Keuka Lake at Branchport on Oct. 5. A. W. Fudge of Elmira saw 6 American Egrets between Addison and Campbell on July 12. My last date on Green Heron was Oct. 6, and Great Blue Herons have been uncommon. The Chemung Valley club gives the first date on migrating Canada Geese, a flock of 25 flying over Horseheads, about the middle of October flocks of one and two hundred were reported from various quarters. Black Ducks nest in swampy woods over the area, and come to the lakes after the breeding season — first on Keuka came in on August 20. Mrs. Welles writes that they are scarcer on Lowe Pond near Big Flats this fall than normally. Baldpates came to the basin at Branchport early in October, while Prof. Guthrie found two Pintails at the Hollister marsh near Branchport late in September. Both species of Teal appeared at the Hollister marsh in late September and early October, and Wood Ducks were still there on October 17.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Sharp-shinned Hawks were at Catlin, near Elmira, all summer, but have been seen only rarely here about Branchport. Red-shouldered Hawks nested some three miles north of Prattsburg, and in the City Hill area just south of Dresden. Mrs. York observed Bald Eagle over her place at Elmira on June 25 and 29. Bob-whites were found on Christian Hollow road south of Elmira on July 6, and in June and July several were seen and heard near Penn Yan and Keuka Park. It was learned that these last were some of 20 that were liberated this summer by a man near Penn Yan who raised them.

The outlet at Keuka Lake empties into Seneca Lake at Dresden, where it has built up a small delta of sandbars which attract shore birds in season. Semipalmated Plover, Semipalmated and Pectoral Sandpipers and Sanderlings were there in late September and early October. Upland Plovers were discovered in two new areas near Prattsburg during the summer, and Mrs. McMurty of Wellsville found them near Alfred in July. Mourning Doves appear to have begun migrating earlier this fall, and I have seen none since October 5. While heard intermittently during the summer, Great Horned Owls began calling with fair regularity the second week in August.

**SWIFTS — SWALLOWS:** My last date on Chimney Swift is September 5, and on Hummingbirds Sept. 15. There was a greater number of Kingbirds scattered over the area this year than I have known in twenty years; my last date was Sept. 3. Last date on Crested Flycatcher, Sept. 2; Phoebe, Oct 15; and Wood Pewee, Sept. 21. Last Barn Swallow date reported, Sept. 12; Bank Swallow, August 15; and Purple Martin, Sept. 5.

**NUTHATCHES — GNATCATCHERS:** The writer found Red-breasted Nuthatches near Branchport on Sept. 20, while Mrs. York had them at Elmira on October 9. Last date on House Wrens here, Sept. 21, and Long-billed Marsh Wrens, Sept. 28. Catbirds stayed till Oct. 5, and my last date on Brown Thrasher, Sept. 24. Robins have been about in much smaller numbers than usual, almost no large flocks being observed since early in September. My last date reported on Wood Thrush is Sept. 23. Harold C. Wood of Hammondsport wrote me of a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher being picked up dead on Long Point, three miles south of Dresden during July.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** My last date on Yellow-throated Vireo is Sept. 7; on Blue-headed, Oct. 6. (Mrs. York at Elmira); Red-eyed, Sept. 15, and Warbling, Sept. 18. Black and White Warbler was observed by the Watkins group on Oct. 11.

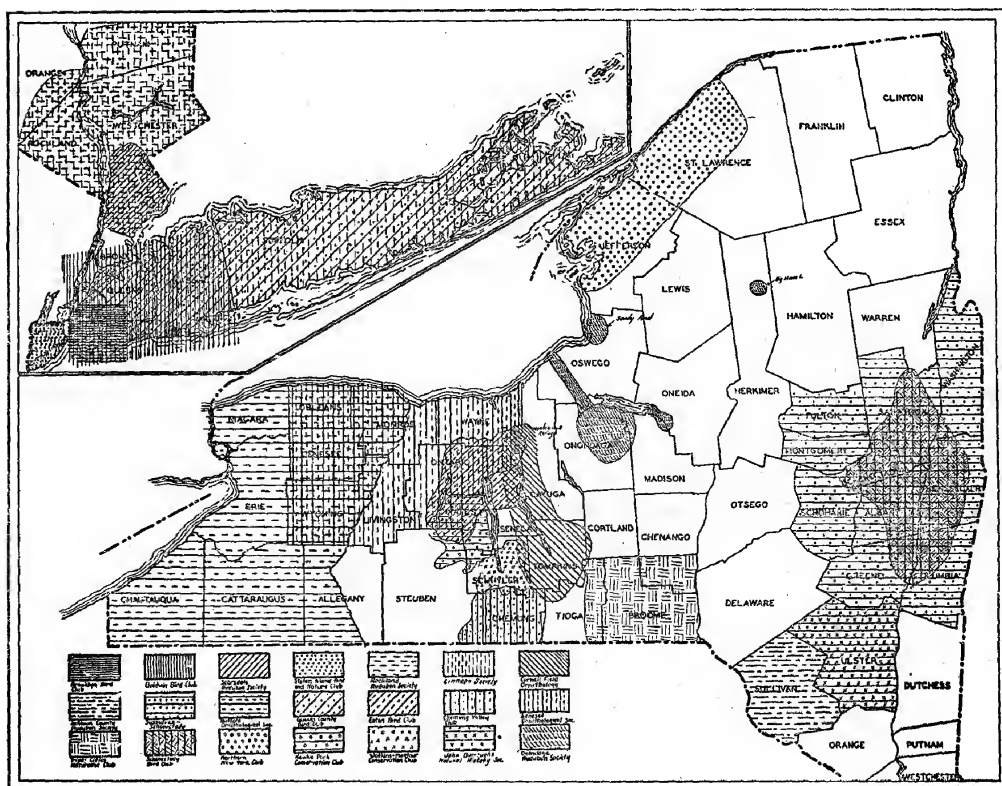


The writer banded a Tennessee Warbler on August 1. Black-throated Blue Warbler, Oct. 11 (Watkin group), and the Watkins club gives me the earliest date on Myrtle Warbler, Sept. 19. I banded on Ovenbird here at Branchport on Sept. 25, and banded a Connecticut Warbler the next day, 26th. Last date on Northern Yellowthroat, 2 banded on Oct. 5.

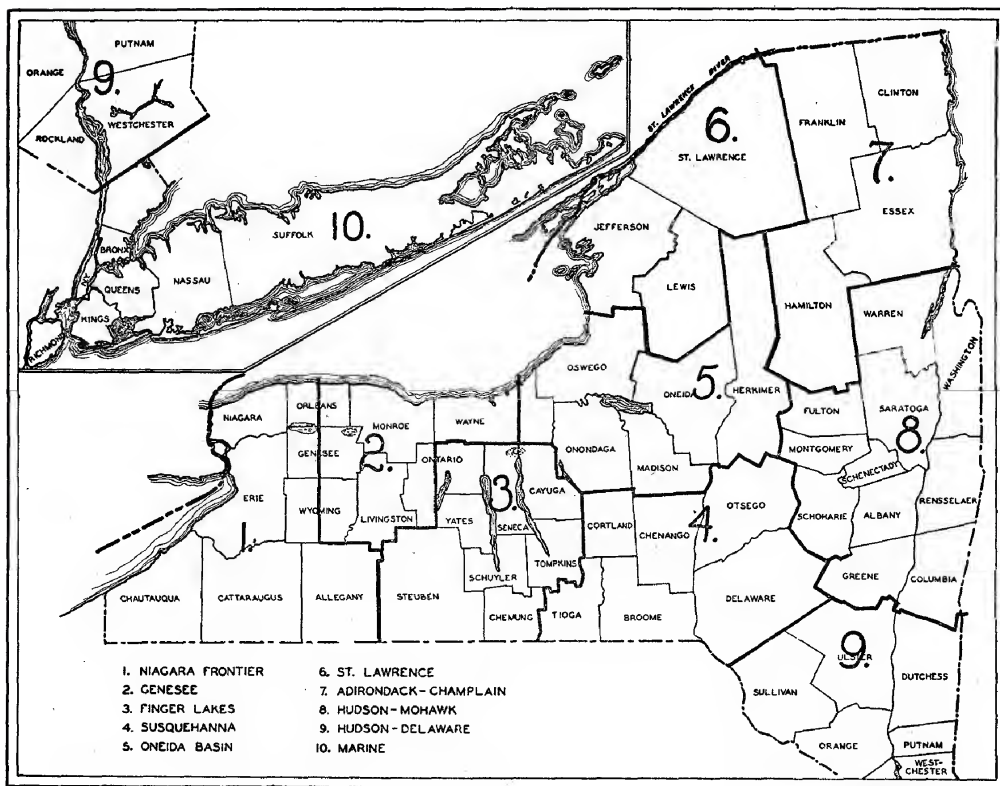
**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Bobolinks were on the hills back from Keuka Lake until Sept. 8, and my last Baltimore Oriole was August 31. Last Scarlet Tanagers on Sept. 24, when I banded two. Indigo Bunting was here till Oct. 1, and last Rose-breasted Grosbeak on Sept. 17. First Slate-colored Juncos came in here on Sept. 24, and first White-crowned Sparrows on Oct. 1. First White-throated Sparrows on Sept. 15; last dates on Savannah Sparrows, Oct. 9, and on Chipping Sparrows, the same date.

Chas. J. Spiker  
Branchport, N. Y.

## AREAS COVERED BY MEMBER CLUBS



## NEW REGIONS EFFECTIVE APRIL 1954



### REGION 3 — LAKE ONTARIO

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Many waterfowl which don't usually summer here lingered on through June and July but no direct evidence of nesting was found. Two Ruddy Ducks were seen on June 26 on Long Pond and a Lesser Scaup was reported June 27. Two Green-winged Teal, one Gadwall and one Canvasback were reported as late as July 4. Rose's Marsh yielded a lone Canada Goose on July 17, an American Baldpate on July 23, and an American Golden-eye on July 30. The American Egret made its first appearance July 20 at Tryon Park and several were observed there and along the lake shore during August. An early record and high count of 17 White-winged Scoters were reported on Braddock's Bay Sept. 5.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** A small flight of Broad-winged Hawks was noted at the Lakeshore as late as June 26. A White-rumped Sandpiper and a Wilson's Snipe were reported at Ling Road on June 6. Harry Van Beurden saw 17 Upland Plovers at Short Acres on July 25.

Bergen Swamp seems to be our favorite area for Turkey Vultures and on Sept. 12, twenty-six of these birds were seen in the air at one time. Osprey were seen along the Lakeshore on the same date and on Aug. 7 a Duck Hawk was seen. Sora were unusually common during September, with one group reporting as many as 20 birds. Golden Plover were also unusually common, with a Shore Acres high of 38. Of special interest is the report of a Hudsonian Curlew at Braddock's Bay (Monroe Co.) by Bieber and others. A Hudsonian Curlew was seen again on Sept. 12 at Shore Acres by Van Beurden, who also reported a Willet on that date. On Sept. 19-20 a Hudsonian Godwit was added to Shore Acres' list of specials. Both Red

and Northern Phalaropes were reported during the month of September. On Sept. 19, McKinney and Van Beurden captured a weakened immature Parasitic Jaeger at Braddock's Bay (Monroe Co.). It subsequently died and is now a skin at the Rochester Museum. In the middle of September a Little Gull and a Sabine's Gull were seen in the large flock of Bonaparte's and Ring-bills which was located in the region of Charlotte Beach. The Forster's Tern is a visitor which is either on the increase or has been overlooked until recently by Rochester 'birders'. From Aug. 21 to Sept. 19 five reports of these birds came from Braddock's Bay.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Two Pileated Woodpeckers were seen on June 21 at Powder Mill Park and were reported occasionally through the rest of the summer. Brown Creepers, a Hermit Thrush and two Blue-grey Gnatcatchers were seen in late June. Carolina Wrens were noted at two different locations near Sodus Bay during June, July and August. Migrant Shrikes were reported at Henrietta and Shore Acres during July. On Sept. 13 a report of 25 Cliff Swallows came from the Lakeshore.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** A first nesting record of the Blue-winged Warbler was made at the Burrough's Audubon Nature Station. This has long been a breeding area for Golden-winged Warblers and a Brewster's Warbler was seen there on June 6. During the last week of August a Pine Warbler was seen at Highland Park. Sept. 26 seemed to be a peak day for migrating Black-poll Warblers, with a report of 25 along the Lake.

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## REGION 4 — ST. LAWRENCE

We regret to announce the resignation of John Belknap as regional editor. A new editor will be appointed as soon as possible. This report is mainly a field trip on Oct. 10, conducted by VanBeurden, Listman and McKinney (Genesee Ornith. Soc.) to Sandy Pond and along the shore of Lake Ontario to Oswego Harbour.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** From Sandy Pond to Oswego Harbour: 5 Common Loons, 3 Horned Grebes, 30 Pied-billed Grebes, 2 Double-crested Cormorants, 7 Great-blue Herons, 1 American Bittern, 27 Canada Geese, 50 Black Ducks, 10 American Baldpates, 70 Pintails, 7 Wood Ducks, 75 Greater Scaup, 9 Hooded Mergansers, 25 American Mergansers, and 80 Red-breasted Mergansers.

At Sandy Pond: 27 White-winged Scoters, 9 Surf Scoters and one American Scoter.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** From Sandy Pond to Oswego Harbour: 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 1 Red-tailed Hawk, 7 Marsh Hawks and one Osprey; 3 Semipalmated Plover, 3 Killdeer, 9 Black-bellied Plover, 3 Wilson's Snipe, 7 Red-backed Sandpipers and 7 Sanderlings; 6 Black-backed Gulls, 2 Bonaparte's Gulls, 1 Mourning Dove.

At Sandy Pond: 2 Bald Eagles, 1 Golden Plover and one White-rumped Sandpiper. Belknap saw 2 Bald Eagles and a Duck Hawk at Pt. Peninsula (Jefferson Co.) on Aug. 30.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** From Sandy Pond to Oswego Harbour (same observers and date): 1 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1 Hairy Woodpecker, 7 Downy Woodpeckers, 3 Phoebe, 28 Horned Larks, 23 Tree Swallows, 27 Blue Jays, 1550 Crows, 31 Black-capped Chickadees, 7 White-breasted Nuthatches, 2 Brown Creepers, 7 Robins, 1 Hermit Thrush, 3 Bluebirds, 60 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 5 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 9 Cedar Waxwings.

Belknap saw pipits at Sackets Harbour (Jefferson Co.) on Sept. 16.

**VIREOS — SPARROWS:** From Sandy Pond to Oswego Harbour, Oct. 10 (same observers): 50 Myrtle Warblers, 3 Meadowlarks, 17,000 Red-winged Blackbirds, 100 Rusty Blackbirds, 2,500 Bronzed Grackles, 100 Cowbirds, 5 Goldfinches, 33 Slate-colored Juncos, 1 Field Sparrow, 2 White-crowned Sparrows, 7 White-throated Sparrows, one Swamp Sparrow.

The Editor

## REGION 5 — ADIRONDACK

July, August and September were about 4 degrees cooler than the average of the previous three years. October temperatures were about average. August and September were very dry but October 7 brought the first snow to the central Adirondacks.

The crop of spruce, white cedar, hemlock and larch cones is good this year, balsam cone crop light, and pines poor.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** Unusual record of an American Scoter found dead on road near Lake Placid on October 18 (Chase). Buffle-head on Moody Pond at Saranac Lake, November 15, also an uncommon record. Canada Geese flight through Adirondacks is usually fairly light but came through in first half of October as usual. Wood Duck in good numbers in Saranac Lake area this fall. A single, apparently feral Mute Swan appeared on October 29 at Ray Brook (near Saranac Lake); was shot by a hunter.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** It is becoming clear that there are moderate numbers of Hawks which move south through Central Adirondacks in the fall. Chase reports 100-200 hawks passing De Bar Mountain between 9 and 11 a. m. on September 11. A single Golden Eagle is reported passing the crest of Whiteface Mountain on the same date. Meade spent the 13th of September on Whiteface Mountain. Conditions good for a flight but only 1 Osprey, 1 Broad-wing and 1 Red-shoulder were seen. These birds were following the west side of the north shoulder of the mountain at about 4000 feet and moving in a north-south line. The peak of flight may have been September 7 to 11. More work needs to be done on this subject in the area.

During the brood season the number of Ruffed Grouse broods seen were up in size and frequency over last year. There was a heavy road kill by cars in September. But the hunting season has so far shown only scattered and single birds. In general the Grouse are spotty in occurrence this fall. There was a failure of thorn apple crop which may be related to this drop in numbers. Woodcock very few this fall in Essex and Clinton Counties.

A new record for Lower Saranac Lake is two Bonaparte's Gulls on August 16 (Meade).

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Arctic Three-toed Woodpeckers seem more than usually common this fall. Pipits on Whiteface Mountain at 4200 feet level on September 13th. No Shrikes seen as yet.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** First flight of Warblers the night of August 5 to 6 when temperature dropped. Another movement around August 20 to 21.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Meadowlarks still at Saranac Lake, November 8. Heavy flights of Evening Grosbeaks near De Bar Mountain, as last year, since mid October but as yet they have not appeared in any numbers at the usual feeders in Saranac Lake. Several young seen there this past summer. Both Crossbills present all summer and fall in Saranac Lake - Lake Placid region. First Snow Buntings October 18 at Saranac Lake.

Gordon M. Meade, M. D.  
Trudeau, N. Y.

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## REGION 7 — NEW YORK AND LOWER HUDSON VALLEY

Specialists who can relate bird activity to the weather should have a field day with the 1953 fall migration. The summer was dry and only moderately hot — until late August, when a record-breaking stretch of ten or eleven days with maximums about 90 degrees began. Water levels in fresh water streams and ponds were abnormally low. September and early October were remarkably free from violent weather; little rain, no wild winds, equable temperatures.

Why then — and this perhaps the ornithologist-meteorologists can tell us — should the southward migration have been so early? Or was it only chance that gave our region so many fall arrival dates ahead of or close to previous records? At any rate, it seemed to some observers that southward movements were keyed to the fairly mild pressure fronts rather than to temperature changes. As each shallow cold front approached in August and September, the night skies were filled with chirps of migrants.



**LOONS — DUCKS:** The White Herons did not advance up the Hudson in any great numbers this year. Most of those seen were American Egrets. The only Little Blue Herons reported were an August date in West Nyack (Dr. Matthew J. Brennan) and a lone bird at Grassy Point, Sept. 9 (Mr. and Mrs. Frank Steffens). A female Pintail arrived on Sept. 26 at the home pond of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley O. Grierson in Katonah.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** The Hawk migration in Rockland and Orange Counties was considered thin, but Bedford Audubon Society regarded it as good. BAS now has posting rights on 30 acres in the Town of Harrison, north of White Plains — a former hawk-shooting site now established as Hawk Hill Sanctuary. On Sept. 12, a field group saw 21 Ospreys over Hawk Hill, along with a few Sharp-shinned and Marsh Hawks; on Sept. 26, another group counted nine Sharpies, six Ospreys, two Cooper's Hawks, a Marsh Hawk, and a Bald Eagle. Ospreys and Sharp-shinned Hawks also ran strongly around Anthony's Nose and Bear Mountain.

A pair of Coots apparently bred at Congers Lake, a first nesting record for Rockland County (Steffens and others). Dr. Marjorie R. Hopper and others also identified an immature Florida Gallinule on the same lake in September.

Between Aug. 31 and Sept. 4, an unusual number of shorebirds landed on the mud flats that were appearing in Cross River Reservoir, Westchester County, because of the drought. The Griersons found among them: both Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Plover, Least Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Killdeer. Some of these birds remained well into October.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reached Rockland County on Sept. 25 (Hopper) and Westchester County on Sept. 29 (Mrs. John Lentz). The first Red-breasted Nuthatch was reported from Nyack on Sept. 22 (Eugene R. Brown). Red-breasted Nuthatches were observed all summer at Mamaroneck (Steinhardt). On Aug. 24, a Carolina Wren, uncommon on the east side of the Hudson, was seen and heard at Lake Waccabuc, South Salem, by Ruth and Stanley Grierson. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet on Sept. 24 was close to Rockland County's early date (Hopper).

Mrs. Lentz had Blue-headed (Solitary) Vireos at Chappaqua, Westchester County, on Oct. 2 and 8. Dr. Hopper's observation of a Cape May Warbler on Sept. 22 is Rockland County's first fall date.

A truly remarkable series of observations within the Island of Manhattan was made by Geoffrey Carleton of the Linnaean Society of New York. These records attest to the early movement of warblers:

At Inwood Hill Park, July 24 — a female Cerulean Warbler (this species has nested in latter years atop the Palisades south of Alpine, N. J., across the Hudson from Inwood Hill Park), Prairie Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Least Flycatcher. Carleton does not believe any of these species breed in the park.

At Inwood Hill, July 24 and 25 — three Nashville Warblers. This is either a record early date, or close to it.

In Central Park, Aug. 12 — Myrtle Warbler (either an early record or close to it), Bay-breasted Warbler (also very early).

In Greenwich Village, Aug. 12 — Tennessee Warbler (very early).

In Greenwich Village, Aug. 16 — Magnolia Warbler (near a record).

On the night of Sept. 21, a large flock of migrants, mostly warblers, blundered into the 1,250-ft. Empire State Building in New York City. In the morning, 277 dead birds of 19 species were picked up on the building's setbacks and in the street. Six were found still living: four Yellowthroats, a Bay-breasted Warbler, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Of the dead, 104 were Bay-breasted Warblers, attesting to the abundance of this species this year. Among the rarer birds were two or three Philadelphia Vireos.

The Empire State Building was also the scene of a similar accident on the night of Sept. 11, 1948, when more than 300 birds were killed. At that time, the migrants appeared to be riding a cold air mass that suddenly thinned down into a shallow wedge, forcing the birds nearer to earth. This autumn's accident is without an explanation, for the southbound mass was 8,000 ft. deep.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** A Lincoln's Sparrow was spotted by the Griersons in the marsh at their home near Katonah on Sept. 23. This bird is not often reported in the fall. The earliest reports of White-throated Sparrows are Sept. 20 in Rockland County (Hopper) and Sept. 30 in Westchester (Grierson). Early Juncos



are reported from Nyack Sept. 23 (Hopper) and Lake Kitchawan, Town of Lewisboro, Oct. 7 (Mr. and Mrs. Arthur C. Weeks).

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## REGION 8 — LONG ISLAND

The large Common Terns and Black Skimmers reportedly were successful in weathering early summer downpours, but these apparently affected the Least Tern on western Long Island. On eastern Long Island the spread of the Herring Gull has caused a great diminution in the nesting populations of Terns and Skimmers by usurping their nesting grounds. An increase in Wood Ducks was reported at Mill Neck and 40 Gadwall pairs summered at Jones Beach Sanctuary Pond. Strays of summering Brant, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal were seen at Idlewild, and an Old-squaw was noted in July at Port Jefferson. As for fall migration many species of land birds lingered into late October with the long dry spell; American and Snowy Egrets had about disappeared by the middle of the month.

**LOONS — DUCKS:** There were very few breeding records of Pied-billed Grebe. The American Egret nested for the first time in the Long Island area this summer (Fishers Island); two pairs of Snowy Egrets bred on Jamaica Bay island and the Yellow-crowned Night Herons in several locations.

An increase of migrating Loons was noted by November 1; no Horned Grebes to date; the White Pelican, present at Mill Neck from June, 1952, was still there on September 27. A European Cormorant was seen at Shinnecock, September 26 (R. Wilcox) and a Louisiana Heron at Jones Beach, August 30 to September 3. No large flocks of Canada Geese or Brant reported; but an adult Blue Goose with two immatures and two immature Snow Geese at Bridgehampton, mid-October, suggested a hybrid family group (C. McKeever). Pintails, Baldpates and Shovelers arrived about on time; the Ring-necked Duck was noted westward to Babylon.

**HAWKS — OWLS:** Reports came of the Red-tailed Hawk on eastern Long Island and a scattering of nesting Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks on the western half. Records of nesting Clapper Rails came from the Sound as well as the South Shore. There is apparently a decrease of Piping Plovers at Moriches, according to Roy Wilcox, who consistently bands in this area. The Herring Gull colonies on Gardiner's and Cartwright Islands and in Shinnecock Bay are increasing in size. Terns and Skimmers are diminishing in the same area and the sandy islands around Moriches Bay, once containing prosperous colonies, are becoming overgrown.

Regarding migration, there was a poor Buteo flight, and very few flight days for Accipiters and Falcons. A half-dozen or more Soras were noted around September 4, and at least four Black Rails were flushed out of the grassy marsh near Moriches Inlet on that date. Two Florida Gallinules were present at Lawrence into late October and two Wilson's Plovers at Jones Beach, September 3 (J. Bull). A maximum of 23 Golden Plovers were seen in a flock at Orient, September 13 (R. Adelson). Goodly numbers of Hudsonian Curlew and both Godwits were recorded, also two Northern Phalaropes at Moriches Inlet, August 22. Among Gulls there is little to report, except two Bonaparte's at Moriches, September 4 (Wilcox). An early September Tern flight included fair numbers of Forster's and Black Terns and a few Roseate Terns. Around the hurricane season several Royal Terns put in an appearance at Shinnecock (about August 30) and two were still present on September 29.

The Mourning Dove has become more abundant in recent years; late nesting, Baldwin, September 28 one young in nest. Practically no Owl records; no nesting reports of Long-eared; one of Great-horned at Manorville ended in failure (G. Raynor); no Saw-whet Owl records to date this fall.

**SWIFTS — SHRIKES:** There was one record of Nighthawk possibly nesting: Manorville, July 1. A good fall flight of this species over Long Island was noted on September 27. There were several fall records of Red-headed Woodpecker but no nesting report. Arkansas Kingbird was present on Oak Island, August 29 (Dr. and Mrs. H. Kimball); no report since. A late Olive-sided Flycatcher was seen at Idlewild, October 16 (J. Mayer, G. Rose). The Least Flycatcher was found again

breeding in the Syosset - Oyster Bay area; Purple Martin was wide-spread, and 23 Rough-winged Swallows were counted at Mill Neck, June 14 (W. Post, Jr.). Carolina Wren is again spreading westward with the mild winters. A fine colony of Hermit Thrushes was present in the Eastport - Speonk pine belt. A Mockingbird showed up again at Merrick where it was in the same location as last year, but did not breed either year. A Magpie was present at Lawrence during October. There are practically no records of Gnatcatcher and very few of Migrant Shrike.

**VIREOS — WARBLERS:** Both the Yellow-throated and Warbling Vireos occupy north short tracts from Manhasset to Oyster Bay; there was no abundance of either species during migration. The Philadelphia Vireo was reported from several locations in September on the south shore. Two reports of Black-throated Green Warbler nesting came from northern Nassau County and one from Mastic. The Chat was reported from both locations also. The fall movement of warblers continued through with such species as the Nashville, Prairie, Black-throated Blue and Black-throated Green, Chat and Redstart being seen toward the end of October. The Connecticut was present to October 16 at Idlewild. One or two reports of Orange-crowned and Brewster's Warbler came in from western Long Island.

**BLACKBIRDS — SPARROWS:** Large flocks of Red-wings and Grackles were present at Seaford, Wantagh in mid-October. Records of the House Finch, formerly to Islip, now extend to Shinnecock Hills. Several records of Blue Grosbeak and Dickcissel came in from the Rockaways to Oak Beach, but both Dickcissel and Lark Sparrow reports were fewer than during last fall. There were no reports of winter finches except Siskin; a flock of 70 appeared at Seaford on October 27.

The first Ipswich Sparrow was seen at Spring Creek, Jamaica Bay, October 24. There was a good flight of White-crowned Sparrows in mid-October, but very few Fox Sparrows to date.

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